

An
ORDINANCE
OF THE
LORDS and COMMONS
Assembled in
PARLIAMENT

For giving power to all the Classicall
Presbyteries

Within their respective Bounds to
Examine, Approve, and Ordaine Ministers
for severall Congregations.

Die Lunæ 10. Novemb. 1645.

ORdered by the Lords Assembled in Parliament, That this
Ordinance for Ordination of Ministers be forthwith prin-
ted and published.

Job. Brown Cler. Parliamentorum.

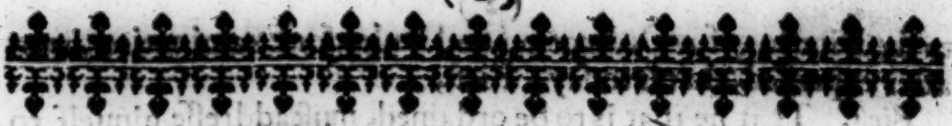
LONDON,
Printed for *Iohn Wright* at the Kings Head in
the old Bayley. 1645.

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Printed by the Stationer and Printer, at the Kings Head in
 the Strand, 1645.

Printed for Iohn Wight at the Kings Head in
 the old Bayley. 1645.



Die Sabbathi 8. Novemb. 1644.

An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament,
For the Ordination of Ministers.



Whereas the word *Presbyter*, that is to say, *Elder*, and the word *Bishop*, do in the Scripture intend and signifie one and the same Function, although the Title of *Bishop* hath been by corrupt custome appropriated to one, and that unto him ascribed, and by him assumed, as in other things, so in the matter of Ordination, that was not meet; which Ordination notwithstanding being performed by him, a *Presbyter* joyned with other *Presbyters*, we hold for substance to be valid and not to be disclaimed by any that have received it; and that *Presbyters* so ordained, being lawfully thereunto appointed and authorized, may ordaine other *Presbyters*: And whereas it is also manifest by the Word of God, that no man ought to take upon him the Office of a Minister, untill he be lawfully called and ordained thereunto; and that the work of Ordination, that is to say, an outward solemne setting a part of persons for the Office of the Ministry in the Church by preaching *Presbyters*, is an Ordinance of Christ, and is to be performed with all due care, wisdom, gravity, and solemnity. It is Ordained by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, and by the authority of the same, (after advice had with the Assembly of Divines now convened at *Westminster*,) That the severall and respective Classicall *Presbyters* which in their severall and respective bounds, may examine, approve and ordaine *Presbyters*, according

to the Directory for Ordination, and Rules for Examination, hereafter expressed, that is to say; First,

First, That he that is to be ordained, must addresse himself to the Presbytery, and bring with him a testimoniall of his taking the Covenant of the three Kingdomes; of his diligence and proficiency in his Studies; what Degrees he hath taken in the University, and what hath been the time of his abode there, and withall of his age, which is to be twenty foure yeares at least; but especially of his life and conversation.

Secondly, the Presbytery shall proceed to enquire touching the grace of God in him, and whether he be of such holinesse of life as is requisite in a Minister of the Gospel; and to examine him touching his learning and sufficiency, and touching the evidence of his calling to the holy Ministry, and in particular, his fair and direct calling to that place to which he is designed.

The Rules for Examination are the se.

I That the party examined be dealt with in a brotherly way, with mildnesse of spirit, and with speciall respect to the gravity, modesty, and quality of every one.

2. He shall be examined touching his skill in the Originall Tongues; and that tryall to be made by reading the Hebrew and Greek Testament, and rendring some portions of them into Latine; and inquiry also shall be made after his other learning, and whether he hath skill in Logick and Philosophy.

3. What Authors in Divinity he hath read and is best acquainted with; and triall shall be made of his knowledge in the chief grounds of Religion, and of his ability to defend the Orthodox Doctrine contained in them, against all unsound and Erronious opinions, especially those of the present age; of his skill in the sense and meaning of such places of Scripture, as shall be proposed unto him in cases of Conscience, and in the Chronologie of Scripture, and of the Ecclesiasticall History.

4 If he hath not before preached in publike, with approbation of such as are able to judge; he shall at a competent time assigned him, and before the Presbytery, expound such a place of Scripture as shall be given him.

5 He shall in a competent time also frame a discourse in Latine, upon such a common place or controversie in Divinity, as shall be assigned him, & exhibit to the Presbytery such Theses as expresse the sum thereof, and maintain a dispute upon them.

6 He shall preach before the people, the Presbytery, or some of the Ministers of the Word, appointed by them, being present.

7 The proportion of his gifts in relation to the place unto which he is called, shall be considered.

8 Besides the tryall of his gifts in preaching, he shall undergoe an examination in the Premisses two severall daies or more, if the Presbytery shall judge it necessary.

Thirdly, After which, he being approved, is to be sent to the Church or other place where he is to serve, (if it may be done with safety and conveniency,) there to preach three severall daies, and to converse with the people, that they may have tryall of his gifts for their edification, and may have time and leasure to inquire into, and the better to know his life and conversation.

Fourthly, In the last of those three daies appointed for the making known of his gifts in preaching, there shall be sent from the Presbytery to the Congregation, (if it may be done with safety and conveniency,) a publique instrument in writing, which shall publikely be read before the people, & after affixed to the Church door, to signifie such a day any member or members of the said Congregation, or any other person or persons whatsoever, or any of them, may put in with all Christian discretion and meeknesse, what exceptions they have against him; and if upon the day appointed there be no just exceptions against him, the Presbytery shall proceed to Ordination.

Fifthly, Upon the day appointed for Ordination (which is to be performed in that Church where he that is to be ordained is to serve, (if it may be done with safety and conveniency,)) a solemn Fast shall be kept by the Congregation, that they may more

earnestly joyn in prayer to God for a blessing upon the person and labour of this his servant, solemnly to be set apart to the Office of the Ministry for their good; the Presbytery shall come to the place, or some Ministers of the Word, at the least shall be sent from the Presbytery, whereof one shall Preach to the people concerning the office and duty of the Ministers of Christ, and how the people ought to esteem him for the works sake.

Sixthly, After the Sermon ended, the Minister which hath preached shall in the face of the Congregation, demand of him who is now to be ordained, concerning his faith in Christ Jesus, & his perswasion of the truth of the reformed Religion, according to the Scriptures; his sincere intentions and ends in desiring to enter into this calling, his resolution to be diligent in Prayer, reading, meditation, preaching, ministering the Sacraments, and doing all ministeriall duties towards his charge; his zeal and faithfulness in maintaining the truth of the Gospel, and purity of the Church; against Error and Schisme; his care that himself and family may be unblameable, and examples to the Flock; and his resolution to continue in his duty, against all trouble and persecution.

Seventhly, In all which having declared himselfe, professed his willingness, and promised his indeavours by the help of God; the Presbytery, or the Ministers sent from them, shall solemnly set him apart to the office and worke of the Ministry, laying their hands on him, with a short Prayer or blessing, to this effect.

THankesfully acknowledging the great mercy of God in sending Iesus Christ for the redemption of his people, and for his Ascention to the right hand of God the Father, and there powring out his Spirit, and giving gifts to Men, Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, and Teachers for the gathering and building up of his Church, and for sitting and inclining this man to this great Worke, to beseech him to fill him with his holy Spirit, who in his name we * set apart to this holy Service, to fulfill the work of his Ministry in all things, that he may both save himselfe and the people committed to his charge.

* Here let them impose their hands upon his head.

Eighthly,

Eightly, This, or the like Form of Prayer, or blessing, being ended, let the Minister who preached, briefly exhort him to consider the greatnesse of his Office and Worke, the danger of negligence, both to himself and his people, the blessing which will accompany his faithfulness in this life, and that to come; we haue let him exhort and charge the people in the Name of God, willingly to receive and acknowledge him as the Minister of Christ, and to maintaine, incourage, and assist him in all the parts of his Office. And so by Prayer commending both him and his flock to the grace of God, after the singing of a Psalme, let the Assembly be dismissed with a blessing.

Ninthly, Let such as are chosen or appointed for the Service of the Army, or Navy, or Colledges, or other Charge, be Ordained as abovesaid, in such Church as the Classicall Presbytery to which they shall addresse themselves, shall think fit; and such Alterations made by the Minister that Ordaineth, from the Exhortation last before prescribed, as the circumstance of place and person shall require.

And be it further Ordained by the said Lords and Commons, and by the authority aforesaid, That every person formerly Ordained a Presbyter, according to the forme of Ordination, which hath been held in the Church of England, and is to be removed to another Charge, do bring the Presbytery where he is to be placed, a Testimoniall of his Ordination, and of his abilities and conversation, whereupon his fitnessse for that place where he is to be removed, shall be tryed by his preaching there, and (if it shall be judged necessary) by a further examination; and so, without any new Ordination, he shall be admitted, if he be appointed as fit for that place: And if any person Ordained Minister in Scotland, or in any other Reformed Church, be designed to a Congregation in England, he is to bring from that Church to the Presbytery where he is to be placed, a sufficient testimoniall of his Ordination, of his life and conversation while he lived with them, and of the causes of his remouall; and to undergoe such a Triall of his fitnessse and sufficiency; And to have the same course held with him in other particulars, as is set down in the foregoing Rule and Provision touching the Examination and Admission of persons formerly Ordained in England.

And it is further Ordained, That Records be carefully kept by
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the Register, to be nominated by the Presbytery, of the names of the persons Ordained, with their testimonial of the time and place of their Ordination, and of the Ministers who did ordain them, and of the Charge to which they are appointed; and that no money or gift, of what kinde soever, shall be received from the person to be Ordained, or from any on his behalfe, for Ordination, or ought else belonging to it, by the Presbytery or any of them, or any appertaining to any of them, upon what pretence soever, except to the Register, for the entry, Instruments and Testimonials of his Ordination, which shall not exceed the sum of ten shillings for each person Ordained.

And it is yet further Ordained by the Authority aforesaid, that all persons who shall be Ordained Presbyters, according to this Directory, shall be for ever reputed and taken to all intents and purposes, for lawfull, and sufficiently authorized Ministers of the Church of England, and as capable of any Ministeriall employment in the Church, with the rights and profits belonging thereunto, as any other Presbyters whatsoever, already ordained, or hereafter to be Ordained; And that all Presbyters, who are hereby appointed and authorized to ordaine, and shall (according to this present Directory,) ordaine any Presbyters are hereby declared, to performe an acceptable service to this Church and Kingdome, and shall have the protection of both Houses of Parliament for their indemnity.

Provided that this Ordinance shall stand in force for twelve Moneths and no longer: Any thing in this Ordinance contained to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

F I N I S.

Die Veneris 20. Febr. 1645.

*Resolved by the Lords and Commons in
Parliament assembled.*

THat there be forthwith a Choice made of Elders thorowout the Kingdome of *England* and Dominion of *Wales* in the respective Parish Churches and Chappels, according to such Directions as have already passed both Houses, bearing date the 19. of August 1645. and since that time: And all Classes and Parochiall Congregations respectively are hereby authorized and required forthwith effectually to proceed therein accordingly.

Resolved, &c.

THat notice of the Election of Parochiall and Congregationall Elders,
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and of the time when it shall be, be given by the Minister in the publike Assembly the next Lords Day but one before: And that on that said Lords Day a Sermon be preached preparatory to that weighty business.


Resolved, &c.

That such Election shall be made by the Congregation, or the major part of them then assembled, being such as have taken the Nationall Covenant, and are not Persons under age, nor Servants that have no Families.

Resolved, &c.

That these three Votes be forthwith communicated to the Lord Mayor, and immediatly put in due execution.

Ioh. Brown Cler. Parliamentorum.



Die Jovis 26. Febr. 1645.

*Resolved by the Lords and Commons in
Parliament assembled.*

THat the Tryers of Elections of Elders shall have power to heare and determine all Exceptions brought unto them concerning undue Elections, as well as to receive them; And also to call before them all persons Elected to be Elders, (and accepting such Election) against whom any Exceptions shall be brought in; And to send for such Witnesses as shall be nominated to them, by such persons as shall bring in the said Exceptions; And shall have power to examine upon Oath, both the persons bringing in such Exceptions, and the said Witnesses, concerning any undue proceedings in the manner of the said Election

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lection, and concerning all matters of Ignorance and Scandall, objected against the person elected, and expressed in any Ordinance of Parliament, to bee a sufficient cause of Suspension from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and of which any Eldership by Ordinance of Parliament, hath cognizance and jurisdiction; And that shall be proved to have been committed within one whole year before the Exceptions exhibited; And that the person against whom the Exceptions are taken, shall have the like liberty to produce Witnesses to be examined in like manner on his behalf.

Resolved, &c.

THat the Triers shall have power to examine whether the Elders that are to be chosen, be so qualified as is expressed in the Ordinance which hath passed both Houses.

Job. Brown Cler. Parliamentorum.